

REMARKS

Favorable and prompt allowance of the pending claims in the application is respectfully requested on the basis of the following particulars.

1. In the claims

In the amendment to the claims, claim 34 is amended with the allowable subject matter of claim 41. Claim 41 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. While the applicant respectfully disagrees with the prior rejection of claim 34, this amendment is made to expedite the eventual allowance of the pending application. Claim 34 should therefore be allowed.

The claims dependent from claim 34 are patentable based on their dependency from claim 34 and their individually recited features.

In view of the allowability of the subject matter of claims 36 and 43, these claims are rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations from the claims from which they previously depended from. Therefore, claims 36 and 43 are in condition for allowance.

Previously withdrawn claims 1-33, 47-55, 77-81, 85-90 and 97-99 are currently canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. This cancellation is made so as to facilitate the eventual allowance of this application.

The applicant reserves all rights to the canceled subject matter so as to file the subject matter of these claims in a continuation application.

Entry of the amendment to the claims is respectfully requested in the next Office communication.

2. Rejection of claims 34, 35, 37-40, 42, 44, 45, 94 and 95 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,778,449 (Oetting) in view of U.S. patent 4,666,158 (Moro)

This rejection is moot in view of the amendment to claim 34 with the allowable subject matter. The remaining claims in the rejection depend from claim 34, and are patentable based on their dependency from claim 34 and their individually recited features.

3. Conclusion

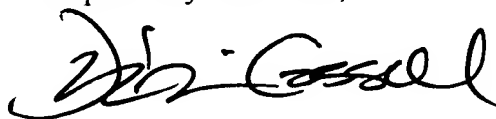
As a result of the amendment to the claims, and further in view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that every pending claim in the present application be allowed and the application be passed to issue.

If any issues remain that may be resolved by a telephone or facsimile communication with the applicant's attorney, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the numbers shown below.

BACON & THOMAS, PLLC
625 Slaters Lane, Fourth Floor
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-1176
Phone: (703) 683-0500
Facsimile: (703) 683-1080

Date: February 26, 2007

Respectfully submitted,



JUSTIN J. CASSELL
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 46,205